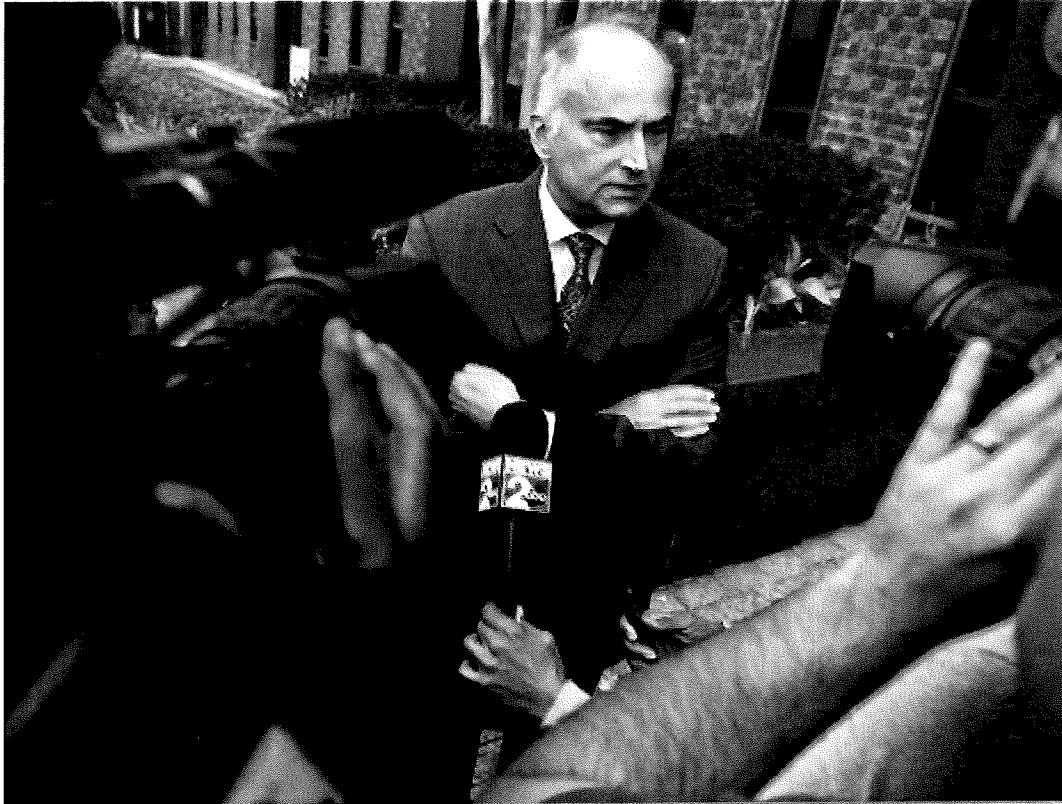


# Nashville Judge Casey Moreland resigns amid federal corruption charges

Conditions of Moreland's release include monitoring and home confinement until at least April 5. He cannot have a mobile phone.



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(Photo: George Walker IV / The Tennessean)

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Facing a crescendo of calls for his departure and an ongoing FBI corruption probe, Nashville General Sessions Judge Casey Moreland will resign.

The jurist's resignation, which according to a letter addressed to Mayor Megan Barry is effective Tuesday, was timed as a bargaining chip in Moreland's Friday request that a federal judge release him from jail pending trial.

"Given the current circumstances, I recognize this is the right and honorable thing to do," the letter says. "I have always been proud to serve the citizens and residents of Davidson County and to work with the many fine judges that have and continue to serve on the bench."

**EXHIBIT 2**

Moreland shuffled into a federal courtroom Friday afternoon, a baggy and drab green jail jumpsuit hanging from his frame. The courtroom benches were packed with spectators hip to hip, including reporters, Acting U.S. Attorney Jack Smith and Tim Discenza, the former federal prosecutor now tasked with investigating the state's judges. The judge's pending resignation, announced by his lawyer Peter Strianse during the hearing, ends the judicial ethics inquiry.

Within the course of about three hours Friday, U.S. Magistrate Judge Joe Brown found there was probable cause to sustain the obstruction of justice charges against Moreland and, citing his newly announced resignation, allowed him to be released on home confinement.

The 59-year-old soon left downtown Nashville's federal courthouse, having spent three nights in jail since his Tuesday arrest.

Conditions Moreland must obey include location monitoring and home confinement, with a single outing next week to clean out his judicial chambers, according to the judge's ruling. He cannot have a cellphone, and his wife must submit hers to inspection by law enforcement officers. Violating terms of his release could add an additional 10 years in prison to any sentence he receives.

Federal prosecutors argued Moreland should be detained before trial because he had already shown he posed a danger to witnesses in the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Cecil VanDevender in a court memorandum revealed new details, including that Moreland kept a list of 13 people, which investigators found on Moreland's iPhone, labeled "witnesses."



On the list, according to the memo, is a woman who has made public allegations against the judge.

The FBI charges Moreland paid more than \$6,000 so the woman would recant her allegations, and plotted to have drugs planted in her car and found in a staged traffic stop.

Federal prosecutors say that scheming was not an aberration.

Jackie Moreland, wife of Judge Casey Moreland, leaves the federal courthouse with attorney Warrick Robinson on Friday, March 31, 2017, in Nashville. (Photo: George Walker IV / The Tennessean)

"The fact that Moreland has already attempted to tamper with Person 1 (the woman) strongly suggests that he may also be inclined to tamper with some or all of the other individuals included on the list," VanDevender wrote. The woman is identified only as "Person 1" but is believed to be Natalie Amos based on matching accounts in the federal documents and court records.

Moreland's lawyers, Strianse and Worrick Robinson, argued that Moreland should be released pending trial. Moreland's wife, Jackie Moreland, took the witness stand in Brown's courtroom, asking her husband to be released, too.

She said her husband of more than three decades moved out in February after allegations of infidelity in the news media.

She described Moreland as a man deeply dedicated to, and impacted by, his work. She said two specialty court programs he helped launch — one for defendants with substance abuse issues and the other for victims of human trafficking — were his passion but wore on him.

"I can tell you the drug court participants were near and dear to his heart," she said. She explained that was why, years ago when three or four former participants relapsed and died, the judge took it personally. Jackie Moreland said her husband was diagnosed with a depressive disorder in 2009, and sometimes struggled with the mental illness. She said since late last year, Moreland has been in counseling and has stopped drinking.

Moreland's resignation halts a pending judicial ethics inquiry of his actions, according to Chris Craft, a Memphis judge who heads the Tennessee Board of Judicial Conduct.

"Upon the resignation of General Sessions Judge Casey Moreland, the board loses jurisdiction over any complaints which may be pending against him, as the most serious punishments the board can give are suspension or request of the General Assembly to remove the judge from office," Craft said in a statement. A record of the resignation is kept on file, however, should a judge seek office again, Craft said.

In the wake of Moreland's arrest, his peers in General Sessions court made arrangements that his cases would be covered by one of the other 10 sitting judges. The Metro Council is now tasked with picking a replacement until a special election in 2018 to fill Moreland's post.

► **Analysis: Will Casey Moreland's arrest impact his own rulings?**

► **As resignation calls grow, will Moreland face more charges?**

Moreland, a Democrat, was elected in 1998 and re-elected in 2014. The criminal charges against him could carry an up to 20-year prison term if he is convicted, though sentencing guidelines would likely lead to a shorter term. The FBI has charged him with attempting to obstruct justice through bribery, witness tampering and retaliating against a witness. Its investigation is ongoing, and a federal grand jury is expected to soon consider the case.



The new memo filed by prosecutors Friday repeats some of the allegations reported by Nashville news media, such as Moreland's intervention in a traffic stop on behalf of Amos, with whom he had a sexual relationship.

But it also says in December 2015, Moreland wrote a letter on behalf of the woman to the state saying an ignition interlock device should be removed from her car. Moreland told the woman he would have to work overtime, according to the government's motion.

"Overtime may really cost ya," the judge told the woman, inviting her to come to his office to "play secretary," the court documents say.

"I expect a lot from my employees," Moreland noted, according to the documents, adding, "I wasn't referring to your typing skills!"



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Acting U.S. Attorney Jack Smith holds a news conference announcing significant developments in a public corruption matter involving Nashville Judge Casey Moreland at the federal courthouse annex in Nashville on Tuesday, March 28, 2017. (Photo: Shelley Mays / The Tennessean)



Nashville Judge Casey Moreland was booked into the Grayson County, Ky., jail on March 28, 2017. (Photo: Grayson County (Ky.) Detention Center)

► **Timeline: Investigation of Judge Casey Moreland**

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